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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Interests: The United States has limited, but enduring interests in Sub-Saharan Africa. These interests parallel our concerns in other regions of the world: regional political stability, open markets and economic development supporting mutual gains, and the growth of democratic institutions and governments. These goals can, and do, often conflict. In a continent as diverse as Africa, it is impossible to generalize across geographical, cultural, and political lines. However, certain principles will guide US National Security policy and efforts in the region.

The need for regional stability will supersede other concerns for the foreseeable future. Stability does not equate to *status quo*, but rather to managed and deliberate improvement in the political, economic, and military situation across the continent. Such stability is a prerequisite for sustained development and helps forestall regional arms races and military conflict. The stability serves the interests of the nations of Africa, the United States, and also our European allies with their traditional ties to the region.

Open markets and economic development are closely linked to stability, for economic privation fuels social and political unrest, and fosters disruptive ethnic and religious fundamentalist tensions. Given the increasing interdependence of the world economic order, open markets will foster incorporation into the dynamic global economy and fuel domestic development. Such an environment also allows African economies to exploit their wealth in natural resources, garner international investment, and enhance the standard of living for their citizens. However, open economies also force individuals to adjust to rapidly changing market conditions. Nations must provide the mechanisms for easing countries and individuals into these challenges in order not to undermine the domestic and international stability, so vital to sustained development. Open markets also increase the interaction among peoples, furthering the interchange of ideas and fostering political movement towards democracy.

Furthering the growth of democracy in Africa will remain an American interest. Democracies are more inclined to value stability and to work towards continued economic development. However, the transition to democracy can be a fragile period, characterized by political instability. This instability can

undermine economic growth. The transition occurs best when the nation enjoys economic growth with a prospering middle class, an educated population, and a high level of industrialization. These conditions are not prevalent in Africa. Therefore, it is still premature to expect rapid progress towards a Western concept of democracy. Rather, we will expect, and support, stable governmental change which reinforces those conditions which will eventually lead to democracy. We will not compromise on the need to respect the human rights of all residents of all nations, since such respect is not only a recognized international standard of behavior, but is also a precondition for long-term political stability. We will continue to work with regional states to improve standards and accountability in this area.

In addition to these important interests, the US also has other concerns in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is in our interest to preserve access to the important resources of the region. With four of our six largest sources of petroleum, the region plays an important role in meeting our nation's energy needs. Though substitutes may exist for other strategic minerals found on the continent, access to other natural resources in Africa continues to support the mutual economic development of the United States and our African trading partners.

The United States also shares with the region and the rest of the world, on-going concern for the environment on the continent. The damage associated with the rapid growth in population and demands of increased agricultural and industrial production have forever scarred the land and watersheds. Massive migration and dislocation fueled by political and ethnic conflict accentuated deforestation, erosion, and desertification. Mitigation and remediation have been minimal given the limited financial and technical resources, and a world attuned to more visible needs in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, improved agricultural processes, cleaner industry, and more ecologically sensitive mineral extraction processes have minimized further damage. A clean and restored environment will remain a global concern and an interest of the United States.

Context: Africa's current political landscape is the product of European post-colonial independence and ethnic hostilities. Plagued by hostile environments, size, rapid population growth, and over 11 wars since 1980, the continent has been unable to match the economic and political development of other major

regions. While some nations have successfully transitioned to market economies and democracy, most are still fragile and rely on external support. From the end of WWII until the early 1990s, the major powers framed most security issues in the context of the Cold War. Soviet involvement inevitably led to US involvement. After the end of the Cold War, benign neglect characterized US and OECD involvement. Interventions were usually linked to humanitarian disaster relief. Development funds, talent, and resources poured into the continent by the US and other external powers met only limited success.

Troubled economies, combined with ethnic tensions, low education levels, chronic disease, and low standards of living, have provided little support for democracy. Political instability has produced forced and unforced migrations on massive scales. The UN has intervened to provide assistance to refugees, but the presence of large groups of displaced peoples has created a financial drain on the international body and local governments, and spread political instability across borders.

Economic, political, and social privation have provided a fertile ground for religious fundamentalism. Fundamentalist Islam is gaining influence across the middle of the continent, with a resulting increase in terrorism inside and outside of the region.

Technology and resources exist within the region to produce weapons of mass destruction. Extreme ethnic disputes have produced isolated use of chemical and biological weapons. The Republic of South Africa retains the ability to reassemble the nuclear weapons constructed during the 1980-90s, but has refrained from such action to date.

Challenges, Threats, and Opportunities to US Interests: Given that stability is our premier interest in Sub-Saharan Africa, numerous regional threats exist. Instability is fueled by economic and social tensions. Africa will continue to struggle to feed itself. Environmental factors, arable land, drought, desertification will continue to make food production difficult. At the same time, high birth rates and decreasing mortality rates create greater food demands. Difficulties in fulfilling basic survival needs will lead to tribal and clan warfare. The ensuing political unrest will further complicate the problem. However, there are opportunities to improve conditions in the region in the areas of economic development, environmental remediation, and agricultural enhancement.

Economically, literacy rates continue to improve with potential improvements in individual productivity. Since traditionally higher education rates are correlated to decreases in birth rates, this represents a positive trend.

There has been economic growth in South Africa which is spilling over into the surrounding states. If democracy and open markets continue to survive there, it not only presents a model of success for the region, but also an engine to achieve positive change.

Aside from the southern region, there remain limited opportunities for dramatic progress in Sub-Saharan Africa. While opportunities are limited, so are our risks. Limited US political, economic, and military investment in the region will minimize our losses in the event of major social or political upheaval. However, we should look for new opportunities to capitalize on changes that occur.

Means to Promote Interests and Secure Objectives: The US, by itself, lacks the resources and domestic commitment to successfully resolve the myriad needs of Sub-Saharan Africa. Multilateral cooperation with regional states, other developed nations, and international organizations is necessary. We must share this burden with the rest of the world. The majority of the responsibility must reside with Africa itself. The world cannot support a dependent, embryonic Africa. As President Clinton stated in his National Security Strategy, "We are also working with regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and governments throughout Africa to address the urgent issues of population growth, spreading disease (including AIDS), environmental decline, enhancing the role of women in development, eliminating support for terrorism, demobilization of bloated militaries, relieving burdensome debts, and expanding trade and investment ties to the countries of Africa."

Though the US government lacks the financial resources to address all of the economic development needs, we do possess the technical expertise and private capital necessary to fertilize the budding economic development within those regions which are most prepared to implement and develop open market economies. These nations, concentrated in the southern and western regions, are also largely English speaking and are more closely culturally, historically, and economically connected to the US. USAID has successfully demonstrated the potential for marrying capital to entrepreneurs and

opportunities in small business. The South African experience also demonstrates the importance of spill over effects from successful reforms.

Politically, the US must continue to push for human rights reforms through its influence in international bodies and through its influence in regional organizations. Africa must solve its own problems and these bodies provide the best return for limited financial support. Given the importance attached to American rhetoric, the US should continue to encourage positive change and peaceful resolution of conflict within the context of these international fora.

Socially, the US still leads the world in medical research and pharmaceutical production. The US has the ability, through grants and tax incentives, to channel some of this research towards the major medical issues of Africa (such as AIDS) with the potential for mutual benefit. Africa will enjoy an improved standard of living and the US will enjoy markets for important medical services and products.

Militarily, the US controls much of the arms market to Africa, and therefore, commands some influence over regional military forces. The US can use this leverage to undermine efforts to build WMD capabilities, fight arms buildups, and professionalize forces. The US should also use this force to undermine Chinese efforts to build arms markets to underwrite their own military programs.

Policy: The United States must reject previous policies of benign neglect and endorse a policy of cooperative engagement. The US will continue to limit financial support, but can have a positive impact through other policy initiatives.

The US should focus efforts on English speaking countries in the southern and western regions. Assistance should include technical expertise in free enterprise, venture capitalism, and business development. Liberal export-import policies should support those nations attempting to develop true market economies. USAID should abstain from major development projects and concentrate on educational programs. The US will encourage the World Bank and the IMF to support sound development projects which are proven to have lasting economic, vice short-lived political, return.

Militarily, the US should continue to exert pressure to prevent the spread of WMD. We should use IMET to reinforce professionalism in regional military forces. American arms exports will not only

ensure compatibility of their forces in UN peacekeeping operations, but will also undercut Chinese efforts to encroach on the region

Politically the US should continue to work with global and regional organizations to strengthen peaceful resolution of conflict and to provide fora where African states can develop their own solutions. We should continue to offer mediation and/or technical assistance whenever appropriate.

Socially, the US should continue to encourage states to strengthen the rule of law, to foster climates of toleration and respect for human rights and to move towards democracy. However, we must realize that transition to democracy is a dangerous time and is therefore best taken slowly. We must not establish unrealistic expectations of performance or timing. Instead, we should encourage change and praise progress.

Africa will continue to struggle, but will likely fall further behind before realizing any significant progress. The US should remain engaged but should devote our limited resources to more urgent needs elsewhere, where the potential for positive impact is greater.